

MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

Success Stories from the Field

Louisiana Binding Service, Inc.

Manufacturing Extension Partnership of Louisiana

Louisiana Binding Service, Inc. Patents New Product After Surviving Hurricane Katrina

Client Profile:

Louisiana Binding Service (LBS), founded in 1987, is an archival products manufacturer specializing in the preservation and binding of historical courthouse records. Their custom, high-end binders are handmade with American products. LBS employs 112 people at its facility in De Rider, Louisiana.

Situation:

LBS had to relocate after it was devastated by Hurricane Katrina in 2005. Following the relocation, numerous growth issues challenged the company. Only a few employees moved with the company, and training was needed for laborers hired from the new community. LBS contacted the Manufacturing Extension Partnership of Louisiana (MEPOL), a NIST MEP network affiliate, for help.

Solution:

MEPOL referred LBS to third party affiliate Training Logic, Inc. for training. Utilizing funding through the Gulf Coast Hurricane Relief grant, the company underwent leadership and motivational classes to address the morale issues. LBS embarked on a series of Lean offerings, including Principles of Lean, Value Stream Mapping and 5S. From the training received, each LBS department has become more organized and motivated. Team Leader Renee Martin commented, "The MEPOL training helped me get rid of the clutter in my department, eliminating time previously wasted searching, which caused frustration throughout the department. We can now find things when we need them, and the facility runs much smoother."

Co-owners Pat and Scott Williams then focused on their new product, the Disaster Safe County Binder. Weeks after Hurricane Katrina, the Williams were asked to lead disaster recovery efforts at the Jackson Barracks Military Library, located in New Orleans. "This archival collection houses the entire military heritage of the State of Louisiana dating to 1698. It documents our nation and region's history and development under the influence of sovereign and cultural nations," said historian Susanna G. Records, LBS Project Writer. Suffering from severe water and mold damage, the collection was literally frozen in time and housed in climate controlled storage containers at the LBS facility. The company preserved the damaged media over a period of three years. Having seen the effects of Hurricane Katrina firsthand, the brothers knew the industry needed innovative binders to prevent the level of water and mold damage archival collections experienced in the days following the storm. Through MEPOL's third party provider Ted Anthony, LBS filed a non-provisional patent for the new Disaster Safe County Binders. This step led to contracts totaling \$12 million over the next five years. In honor of LBS's outstanding leadership and contributions to their new community, the company was awarded the 2007 Corporation of the Year by the Greater Beauregard Chamber of Commerce.

Results:

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- * Increased/retained sales or \$4 million.
- * Realized \$750,000 in cost savings.
- * Invested \$1.69 million in plant equipment, training, and technology.

Testimonial:

"After Hurricane Katrina, funds were so short that recovery would have been two to three times longer without the matching monies and predetermined pricing afforded by MEPOL. LBS can now recover from its losses, continue to produce innovative and proprietary products, and feel confident to enter the national market."

Pat Williams, Co-owner